

Prairie du Chien in 1827

PRAIRIE DU CHIEN IN 1827.

LETTERS OF JOSEPH M. STREET TO GOV. NINIAN EDWARDS, OF ILLINOIS.¹

¹ Joseph M. Street was born in Virginia, about 1780, and in the winter of 1805–6 emigrated from Richmond, in that state, to Frankfort, Ky., where he published *The Western World* newspaper, “and for several years took a conspicuous part in the gladiatorial field of Kentucky politics.” In the summer of 1812, he became one of the first settlers in Shawneetown. Ill., and formed a wide circle of political and personal friends among the leading pioneers of southern Illinois. He appears to have always been an uncompromising Whig, in office or out, and conducted an active political correspondence for many years with Gov. Ninian Edwards and others; many of his letters may be found in Washburne's *Edwards Papers*, from which volume the two here given are extracted, as casting interesting sidelights on the condition of affairs in Prairie du Chien and the lead region, in 1827. March 30, 1827, we find him writing from Shawneetown to Governor Edwards, complaining that he has a family of “12 white persons besides myself,” dependent on him for a support which he is “at an entire loss” to know how to provide. It appears that he had been conducting a vigorous correspondence with influential men of his party in Washington, begging for office, but he says that those having influence are “sweet in compliments and but give us hopes,” while those who do exhibit “warmth and feeling” are without influence. His correspondence with Edwards throughout the summer is in the same melancholy strain. He had, after persistent labors, obtained the county clerkship at Peoria, in March, 1827, but the appointment cost him \$40 in traveling expenses from Shawneetown to Peoria and return, while the Office proved to be not worth \$30 a year. During the summer he was appointed by Governor Edwards as brigadier general of the state militia, then being organized; but not being called into active service he received no pay. In August, 1827, his efforts were rewarded by a “letter of appointment” to the

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vacant Winnebago Indian agency at Prairie du Chien — Agent Nicholas Boilvin having been drowned in the Mississippi (*ante*, p. 248), during the early summer. Street resigned his militia office, September 16. He moved to Prairie du Chien on the first of November, and from the letter here given it will be seen that he was at first fearful the senate would not confirm his appointment. The senate did confirm it, however, and he was allowed to retain the post at a salary of \$1,200 per year, with John Marsh of Massachusetts as sub-agent (\$500 per annum), and John P. Gates of Canada as interpreter (\$400 per annum); Thomas P. Burnett became sub-agent in 1830, succeeding Marsh. When the county of Iowa was organized by proclamation of Governor Lewis Cass, of Michigan Territory, October 9, 1829, Samuel W. Beall, Louis Grignon and Street were appointed commissioners to locate the seat of justice. Street did good service during the Black Hawk war, and it was to him that the Sac leader was delivered up, by One-eyed Decorah and Chætar. Street appears to have been fairly successful in keeping the Winnebagoes quiet, during the term of his agency. While not particularly popular with either whites or Indians, he was deemed a satisfactory agent. His letters show him to have been a pompous, garrulous man, and given somewhat to flattery of those from whom he expected favors. Upon the final removal of government troops from Rock Island, in November, 1836, he was ordered to establish a Sac and Fox agency there. In the fall of 1837, he accompanied Keokuk, Wapello and about thirty other Sac and Fox chiefs and head-men to Washington; in the party was Black Hawk, who had, in 1833, been placed under Keokuk for safe keeping. The party was received in the leading eastern cities with much ceremony, Indian deputations to the seat of government being then rare. In April, 1839, Street, pursuant to orders, removed his family from Prairie du Chien, which had till then remained as his home, to Agency City, on the Des Moines river, Wapello county, Iowa. During the following winter his health broke down, and he died at the agency house there, May 5, 1840, aged about sixty years.— Ed.

Prairie Du Chien , Nov., 1827.

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My Dear Sir :—I have been here two or 3 weeks and I can assure you I have not been idle, as my official communications would shew. By the same conveyance that takes this letter, a communication *directed to the Secretary of War* , as close written as this, on 3 whole sheets of paper, is sent off. And altho' so newly introduced into the Indian relations, I think you, who are by your knowledge of them and their affairs and countries, so able to judge, would give me some credit for my *tact* , and the easy manner in which 357 I have slid into the spirit of Indian affairs, and took a peep behind the curtain. I am not boasting to the world, but writing to a confidential friend, sure and tried, whose good opinion of me under every difficulty I am striving to justify. I trust that you will never have cause to blush for one, who you so warmly and urgently recommended in highly flattering terms of commendation. I can never cease to remember it.

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I have very minutely enquired into all the causes connected with the late disturbances with the Winnebago Indians.¹ Hastily I will sketch them to you that you may compare them with your accounts and judge between them. I place great reliance upon my information as it comes from different sources, and fits nicely together. Should you have any variant opinions you would highly gratify me by communicating them. I took occasion in my communication to give that weight that is evidently due to the prompt measures you took in relation to the militia. The Winnebagoes and the whites all admit that they apprehended more from the militia ordered to be drafted than all the regulars. They had set down the draft of $\frac{1}{4}$ the militia of Illinois, as an immense number of *Mounted Riflemen* . They remembered the *Rangers of Governor Edwards* , and that was the force they most dreaded.

¹ The Winnebago war, or "Red Bird disturbance," described at length in preceding volumes of *Wis. Hist. Colls.*— Ed.

The Indians had been soured by the conduct of the vast number of adventurers flocking to and working the lead mines of Fever River. Those who went by land, by far the greater

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part, passed through the Winnebago country. Many of them had great contempt for “ *naked Indians* ,” and behaved low, gross, and like blackguards amongst them. The Agent at the mines² granted permits on the Winnebago lands, and numerous diggings were industriously pushed far east of the line between the Ottawas, Chippewas and Pottawatomies of the Illinois, and the Winnebagoes, and great quantities of mineral procured and taken away to the smelters. I should first have called your attention to your treaty of the 24 Aug., 1816, and the treaty of 19 Aug., 1825,³ which together establish the line between the Ottawas, &c., and the Winnebagoes. Take the treaty of 24 Aug., 1816, and lay a map of the country before you, and delineate the

2 The superintendent of the United States lead mines was Lieut. Martin Thomas, who lived at St. Louis. His resident sub-agent, at this time, was Thomas McKnight, who lived at Galena.— Ed.

3 The treaty of 1816 was held at St. Louis, that of 1825 at Prairie du Chien.— Ed.

359 lines as follows: The country of the Ottawas, &c., commences at the Winnebago village on Rock River, 40 miles above its mouth,¹ runs down said river 'till it strikes the line running from the south end of Michigan L. due west to Rock Island,² then up the Mississippi to the southern line of the Prairie du Chien reserve, and along said line east and north to the Wisconsin, then passing southwardly passing on the east of the heads of all the small streams falling into the Mississippi to the beginning. This last line is on a dividing ridge between the Mississippi waters *direct* , and those falling into Rock River. The same treaty makes the unlocated reservations of such tracts of land as the U.S. may choose to locate not exceeding in all 5 leagues square. Then look at the treaty of 19 Aug., 1825 (page 363 of the Book of Treaties), and you will see the bounds of the Winnebago country. Again refer to the map having the last line from P. du Ch. to the Winnebago village in your recollection. Commencing at the sources of Rock River, down the said R. to the W. village, 40 miles above the mouth of R. R., *thence along the line of the Ottawas, Chippewas, and Pottawatomies* (above mentioned) *on a dividing ridge passing east of all the small streams falling into the Mississippi* , to the P. du Ch. reserve, thence with

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the east and north lines of said reserve to the Mississippi, and up the Mississippi to the Bluffs on the east side of said river opposite the mouth of the upper Ioway R., then with said bluffs to the mouth of the Black River, and up said river 'till a due west line from the sources of the west fork of the Wisconsin will intersect Black River, and along said line east to the sources of the W. B. of Wisconsin, down the same and the Wisconsin to the portage, across the portage and down Fox River to the Grand Kan-Kanlin [Kackalin], including the whole of the Winnebago Lake. Leaving an open. line from the Grand

1 Prophetstown, Illinois.— Ed.

2 The language is: "From the southern extremity of Lake Michigan to the Mississippi river." In accordance with the terms of this treaty, the line was run by John Sullivan, a surveyor, in 1818, and his westernmost monument was placed "on the bank of the Mississippi near the head of Rock Island."— Ed.

360 Kan Kanlin to the sources of Rock R. that I can find no treaty closes. From this you perceive that you in the treaty of 24 Aug., 1816, made the only reservations that have been made, and they are *all west of the line of the Winnebagoes. Then we have no colour of claim on the Winnebago lands whatever*. Harrison indeed bought all this land by the treaty of 3 d Nov., 1804, from a point 36 miles up the Wisconsin to Lake Sakægan,¹ at the head of Fox River of the Illinois. This includes the whole mining district, 80 or a hundred miles east of the mouth of Fever River. But in the treaty of the 19 th Aug., 1825, the commissioners recognize and establish the right of the Winnebagoes to this land, and make no exception or reservation except at P. du Ch. This closes all our chance of claim. This is the treaty *you said you had never noticed, and that you would have opposed its ratification had you considered its provisions*. The Winnebagoes complained of the trespass of the miners, and the open violation of the treaty by the permits of Mr. Thomas, the Ag't. No notice was taken of it and the diggings progressed. The Indians attempted force which was repelled, and very angry feelings produced. Under this state of excitement some of them left the neighborhood of the mines and went above this place, as it is supposed to consult some chiefs and influential men there, and to invite the co-

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operation of the Sioux, at any rate the lower band of Sioux with Wabasha. They were met there by a Sioux Indian called Wawzéekootee, or he that shoots in the pine tops, who told the Winnebagoes that the U. S. officers had delivered up several Sioux Indians to the Chippewas, who cruelly murdered them and cut them to small pieces, amongst whom was one innocent Indian; and that the 2 Winnebagoes, in confinement for previous murders, were at the same time butchered by the whites. Now, said he, go and revenge their death, and the moment you strike a blow, the Sioux will help you to kill all the whites above Rock River. Two Winnebagoes who had invited the Sioux of Wabashaw's band, then offered a string

1 Doubtless Pewaukee lake. See *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, ix., 130–134, for opinions as to the identity of Lake Sakægan.— Ed.

361 of wampum, and asked the help of the Sioux. They all refused but pine tops, and he repeated the assurances —“Go strike the first blow and the Sioux will then help you.” Under these feelings the Winnebagoes left them, and struck the blow on the boats, and at this place.¹

1 *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, v., 143; *Hist. Crawford Co.*, p. 199.— Ed.

I have in one case recommended a purchase to be bounded east by a line from the mouth of Pine River about half way from this to the portage, on the Wisconsin, to the point of intersection between the line running due west from the south end of Lake M. and the northwestern line of the Illinois canal purchase; and that a treaty should be held next summer at this place. Gen'l Atkinson promised the Indians that com'rs should be app'ed to treat with them in relation [to] the lead-mine difficulties.

I find Gen'l Clark² is resolved I shall move here, or he, I fear, will endeavor to have me removed. He spoke very positively on the subject of my removal to this place. An immediate removal would subject me to some smart sacrifices—to meet debts which my salary would extinguish if I had a little time to make sales and gradually diminish my

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debts. If I must move this ensuing year or loose the place I shall certainly move, for I cannot do without it. If commissioners are appointed to treat with the Indians for these lands or other purposes, and I could be one of them, the additional sum would enable me to move without any great sacrifice. And I believe I could write a much better treaty than #ds of those I see. Your treaties are the only ones that are *definite* in their lines or terms. Harrison's are the next best. If in writing to Washington you would mention me as being on the spot, and a fit person, if you think I am, you would greatly serve me in my depression. I will mention it to some friends also in Congress.³

2 See *ante*, p. 258, note 2.— Ed.

3 Street's wishes were not granted. The next treaty with the Winnebagoes was concluded at Green Bay, August 25, 1828, Cass and Menard being the commissioners.— Ed.

I have met several chiefs and tolerable large parties of Indians, and had some talks with them. As you advised 362 me, I have deported myself and find no difficulty. Indeed I speak better than I had supposed I could, and casually learn that the Indians and whites think I speak very well. The Indians have a great opinion of my gravity and portly look (on which you joked me) and the officers of the Fort have paid me great attention. Major Fowle sent workmen to fit up my room and run a partition across the council chamber which I had suggested as proper, and is very respectful and friendly.

Like Bolingbroke, tho' I have kept pretty close to my room, and mean not to make an everyday exhibition of my person. I only appear in the Indian room when I wish to see Indians. At other times I turn them over to the Interpreter, and never receive any in my chamber.

You will doubtless think me very particular, and be tired of my garulity; the situation is new to me, and having craved your advice I am shewing you that I am acting upon it, or in accordance with your views.

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Mr. Douseman,¹ who takes this, is going, and I have written very hastily, not knowing of his departure but a few hours. With respect and deep considerations of regard, I am, sir,

¹ Hercules L. Dousman, then confidential agent of the American Fur company at Prairie du Chien.— Ed.

Your most ob dt h ble s t , Jos. M. Street .

Ninian Edwards, Governor of Illinois, Belleville, Illinois .

Prairie du Chien , December 28, 1827.

Dear Sir ,— The closing of the river appears absolutely to cut me off from any intercourse with the civilized world. I arrived here the first of Nov., since when, we have had *one mail* from below. Capt. Clark of the army² came in this

² Doubtless Nathan Clark, afterwards commandant at Forts Howard and Winnebago, respectively. He was a native of Connecticut, entering the service May 19, 1813; became captain in the 5th infantry, June 29, 1824; brevet major, June 29, 1834; died at Fort Winnebago, February 18, 1836. In August, 1827, four companies of the 5th inf. had been stationed at Fort Crawford, under Brevet Major John Fowle, Jr., on account of the Winnebago disturbance. Fowle was a native of Massachusetts and entered the army as second lieut. in the 9th inf., April 9, 1812; captain, June 10, 1814; transferred to 5th inf., May 17, 1815; brevetted major June 10, 1824, for ten years faithful service in one grade; major 3d inf., March 4, 1833; lieut. col. 6th inf., Dec. 25, 1837; killed April 25, 1838, by steamboat explosion.— Ed.

363 month from St. Louis, but brought no letters or papers. I have not heard from my family since I left the Saline. And have not rec'd *one letter* from below this place since we parted. *From this* , you will readily conclude I am quite uneasy. If it is not imposing too much upon your goodness I should like, at a leisure moment, to get a few lines from you. I feel some anxiety to hear also from Washington City, whether my appointment has been

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confirmed. Kane¹ promised to write me, and perhaps has, but as I before remarked, we get nothing from any place except Fever River and St. Peters. I have no newspaper from Washington, and until I can get a paper sent on, I would acknowledge it as a great favour, if you would send me on one of your W. papers after reading it. Or the Richmond *Enquirer*, after you have retained it one week to read, it will be *very new here then*.

¹ Elias Kent Kane, then United States senator from Illinois. Kane was born in New York, but emigrated to Tennessee at an early day; afterwards (1814) settling as a lawyer at Kaskaskia, Illinois. He was elected secretary of state in 1818, and in 1824 was sent to the United States senate; he was reelected in 1830 and died in Washington, Dec. 12, 1835. Governor Reynolds, in his *Pioneer Hist. of Ill.*, writes: "His career in Illinois was brief, but elevated and conspicuous."— Ed.

Is it not astonishing that we have been all this time without a mail? The Postmaster-General has been quite accommodating towards us, and directs all the money arising from our post-office here to be applied by the Postmaster to carrying the mail.² The deputy informed me that during the summer the mail was mostly carried free of expense by steamboats and that the whole fund of the summer was untouched, and would pay for carrying the mail during the winter. Yet the Postmaster, who left here last July and

² In *American State Papers* (*Postoffice*, xv., p. 210), it is shown that "the net amount of postage accruing" for the year ending March 31, 1828, at Prairie du Chien was \$49.81.— Ed.

364 went eastwardly to lay in m'd'z., is on the river below Rock Island with his m'd'z., stopped by the ice.¹ Capt. Clark of the army passed him and came on here some weeks past, and yet no mail. *With this fund on hand*, the deputy here has omitted to send until 7 or 8 days past, and the Postmaster has failed to hire a carrier to bring it up. When Capt. Clark came up there was a fine opportunity of company for any man hired to bring the mail. I am apprehensive that the whole is made subservient to the convenience of a merchant, and that while I am tortured with suspense, he is calculating cent-per-cent and

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hiring *cheap, payable in m'd'z* . You know payments in that way are not as *imperative* as *silver or gold* . I am unacquainted with the P. M., and under excited feelings may judge him hardly. Can you give any aid in establishing a mail route to this place, which shall be an extension of the route from Edwardsville? If you can, I would be gratified if you would write the Postmaster-General. I will be of considerable advantage to your population at F. R., as # of the proposed route lies in your State, and your citizens are quite anxious it shall extend at any rate to Fever R., if no further. This would be a stepping stone that would ultimate in continuing the route to Prairie du Chien.

1 This postmaster was James H. Lockwood. who mentions the fact in *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, il., p. 152. The books of the department, at Washington, show that he succeeded James Duane Doty as postmaster, Dec. 6, 1824, "and so far as shown by the postoffice records remained as such officer until October 27th, 1828, when he was succeeded by Joseph M. Street." Daniel Drew, an old settler of Prairie du Chien, states that he used to carry the mails, as a boy, during General Street's postmastership, and that Thomas Street, the general's son, had charge of the distribution, the office being in the fort.— Ed.

I have written to the P. M. Gen'l this mail, and think if you will add some other information as to the route, and press the subject, the P. M. G. would establish the route. I have proposed the following routes, either of w'h will be perfectly agreeable:

365 From Miles. Miles. Prairie du Chien to Turkey River 25. Turkey River to Fever River 45
70 Fever River to Rook Island Post 60 to Peoria 190 Rock Island Post to Lewiston 120 to
Springfield 70 Lewiston to Springfield 45 to Edwardsville 85 Springfield to Edwardsville 85
to St. Louis 12 Edwardsville to St. Louis 12 = 392. 427

Note .—At a point on the east side of the Mississippi, opposite the mouth of Turkey River, is mines as valuable as any at Fever R., 25 m. from here, and there are 60 or 70 persons building a town they call Cassville.¹ All the other points you well know. And at F. R. when I passed there, many computed there were 4,000 or 5,000 persons. Now, sir, this route (by Lewiston, Fulton county, Illinois, I think preferable) will lie all in your State below Fever River, leaving only 70 miles, the distance of this place from Fever River.

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Certainly, if you can, you therefore ought to aid my efforts. From here to Rock Island is in the Indian country, except the reservations for lead; below that (the line from south end of Lake Michigan) is secured by your treaty of 24 Aug., 1816, to U. S. The mail could pass the whole distance and not spend one night in the Ind. country. From here to Turkey R. (Cassville), 25 m. first night; 2d night, 45 m., Galena, Jo Daviess county; start in the evening from Galena, and 3d night stay at Gratiot's diggings, 15 miles; 4th night, Rock Island Fort, 45 m.; from there I am unacquainted with the road, and wish you to write on, if you please, to the Postmaster-General and give him an account of that section of the route. Or of the one by Peoria, as you may deem best

1 There were huts of roving French and wigwams of indians on the site of Cassville, as early as 1816. When James Grushong stopped there for awhile in 1824, on his return from the Selkirk settlement, on the Red river, he found a deserted cabin, the only evidence of previous habitation. In 1827, the place was first occupied by permanent settlers. Judge Sawyer erected the first lead-smelting furnace there, and Tom G. Hawley the first house. Sawyer left July 3, however, on account of the Indian troubles then rife in the lead region. In 1828, a large number of people arrived. The settlement did not thrive, however, until after the Black Hawk war.— Ed.

366 in your judgment, to which I would readily yield, as you know the country better than I do. You, no doubt, saw the report of Osian M. Ross¹ and 2 other persons who viewed and marked the route from Springfield to Fever River by way of Lewiston last spring. They say the distance is only 205 miles from Springfield to Galena. I estimated it at 225. They report the road to be excellent, and that several loaded wagons proceeded directly after them upon their route and found no obstructions in the way except Rock R. If the route can be made to run by the Fort this difficulty can be removed, as the land there is within our limits, free from any danger from Indians from its vicinity to the Fort, and some person can be got to settle at the ferry, if the Government will extend any privilege to him as to the ferry. The route by Peoria crosses R. R. in the Winnebago country. A glance at the map with your knowledge of this country will make all this plain to you.

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1 Ossian M. Ross, of Lewiston, was one of the earliest settlers in Fulton county, Illinois,—being the first justice of the peace in that county, the first postmaster and the first tavern-keeper,—and kept the ferry across the Illinois river, at the mouth of the Spoon (present site of Havana); he was therefore interested in having the highway between Springfield and the lead mines run by way of his Havana ferry and his Lewiston tavern,— Ed.

A word about the Winnebagoes. By-the-by, you could do something in the furtherance of my views if you have time and disposition to do it, the latter I can never doubt. I have met many of them, and numbers are calling to see me every week. Indians are very curious and like to see and *feel* all who are placed near them. They remain as yet very quiet, and are engaged in hunting and those who come bring some furs and venison. I am, as you know, a novice at Indian affairs. Yet I am unable to conquer my suspicions that there is much dissatisfaction amongst the nation in relation to the people of the U. S., and I am thoroughly convinced that if the Winnebagoes could induce any other tribe or tribes to join them, a stubborn resistance would be made to the *execution of the Red Bird*. He is a *favorite of his people*, and has obtained a high reputation amongst the whites previous to the late most unprovoked murders. 367 You, no doubt, have had a particular account of his voluntary surrender of himself.¹ This manly, chivalric act, his open, free, and high bearing at the time, has something more than ordinary in it. Dressed in his Yancton uniform of white unsoiled skins with a fine white dressed skin robe cast loosely across his shoulders, and mounted on a mettlesome horse with a white flag in his hand, and marching into the camp of Whistler, unconfined, with a pleasant unclouded brow to deliver himself up as a murderer, is a little out of the ordinary course of such things amongst us. You, perhaps, have seen him. He is a tall, well-made, straight Indian, about 38 or 40, and a very pleasant countenance. There is nothing remarkable in the other 7 prisoners, if you except Red Bird's son, a lad of about 12 or 15. He is a pleasant, smiling boy. Confinement goes hard with the Red Bird, and he does not have good health, but if a white man calls to see him all the *nobility* of a *great savage* appears to light up his seemingly intelligent features, and a stranger would point to him as *no every-day character*

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. I wish the trial and execution of the murderers was past. If a strong force is not present when Red Bird is to be hanged if convicted (of which I can see no reason to doubt), I shall not feel free from apprehension of danger. There is an opinion prevalent at St. Louis and amongst some here, that the Winnebagoes are greatly alarmed at late events. They *were* much alarmed at the time Gen'l A.2 and the Ill. volunteers were in their country. The movement was sudden, beyond what the Indians had been accustomed to, and the expected reinforcements from Illinois under your order for $\frac{1}{4}$ the militia, was calculated to take them by surprise; and at the time had its effect. Since then they seem to be gradually awakening, as it were, from a deep sleep; until their fears are given to the winds and there is dead stillness—a portentous calm that all my secret endeavors cannot unravel. They cannot be induced to talk on the subject. And they come and go, ask no questions about the prisoners, and if told of their health, answer

1 *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, viii., 260–264.— Ed.

2 Brevet Brig. Gen. Henry Atkinson, colonel of 6th inf., U. S. A.— Ed.

368 to any mention of them *Uh!* Say they are well or sick it is immaterial— *uh!* —is the answer. And it is evident they wish to avoid the *mention of them* . At the same time the wives and relatives of the prisoners are greatly attended to. The wife of Red Bird does not come near. I learn she is *rich* , as Red Bird was the best hunter in his nation, and great attention is paid to her by the nation. The chiefs who have visited me profess their friendship; but somewhat anxiously enquire when they may expect their Great Father will *settle the line and mark it* between their country and the whites at the mines. They say, “we have left our country to keep our young men from having anything to do with the people at the mines until we hear from our Great Father. This is our promise to Gen'l Atkinson, and we will keep it.” They add, “Gen'l A. promised us that next summer persons should come from our G. F. to council with us about this matter and we will wait and see them.”

1828, Jan'y 1.

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An *old mail* has arrived from Fever River from whence our messenger who was to have gone to Rock Island returned. He met the P. M. there, who sent him back with the *old mail*, directing his young man here to send him 9 or 10 trains to draw up his m'd'z. Now when all things suit the P. M.'s convenience to bring up his m'd'z., we shall be favoured with a mail. I hardly know how to speak patiently of such conduct!

It is with sentiments of sympathetic sorrow, that I notice the death of my friend, Mr. Cook.¹ He was a *clean politician*

¹ Daniel Pope Cook, then member of congress from Illinois. Born in Scott county, Kentucky, in 1793. Went to Ste. Genevieve, Mo., in 1811, and clerked in a store. In 1815, he entered upon the practice of law at Kaskaskia, Illinois. In 1817, he was sent to London as bearer of dispatches to the U. S. Minister, John Quincy Adams, and returned home with him. The following year he was appointed judge of the western circuit of Illinois and "became very popular in that office." In the fall of the same year he was elected attorney-general of the state. Two years later he was elected to congress, after a second masterly contest with John McLean, who had beaten him for the office in 1818. He was among the most notable of the western congressmen. He died at his father's home in Kentucky, Oct. 16, 1827, aged but 36 years. Gov. Reynolds (*Pioneer Hist. of Ill.*, p. 395) pays this tribute to him: "He rose high, shined bright and died soon. He was at one time the darling and idol of the people; he was great, brilliant and active in his mind; his qualifications of heart were noble, generous and benevolent." Street's estimate of his friend appears to have been a just one.— Ed.

369 —and a "ripe and a good one." Few men in the U. S. at his time of life, had entered so completely into a knowledge of the politicks of the U. S. both at home and in its foreign relations. I am apprehensive Illinois is not destined *soon* to be so ably represented upon the floor of Congress. I saw it but a moment past when about to close my letter. It has cast a gloom o'er me and dashed some bright anticipations that were floating in my mind for Ill.

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Should you correspond with any person at W. City likely to do me any good, you w'd greatly oblige me by casually mentioning me as one of the commissioners to treat with the Winnebagoes next summer. I am here, and it w'd be a little mortifying if some person was sent here, *over my head* , to treat with these Indians. Make my respects to Mrs. Edwards and Ninian, and suffer me to renew to you assurances of my high respect and deep obligations.

Your friend, Jos. M. Street .

Gov. Ninian Edwards, Belleville, Ill . 24